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ST. ANGELA MERICI

Song to St. Angela

ED. NOTE—*Written in commemoration of the four hundredth anniversary of the death of St. Angela Merici, Foundress of the Ursuline Order.*

To-day the tokens of the musty tomb
Have been uncovered, and assigned a place
In numbered cases in a silent room,—
Pathetic symbols of a vanished race.
Yet there was little beauty that could last;
The yellowed scroll—the song no longer sung,
Are one with moulded relics of the past,
Echoing answers when the gauntlet's flung.

In Lombardy a peasant girl was given
A fragile dream, and strength to make it true.
Cities have fallen since, and men were driven
By loss of old worlds to discover new.
The purple is no more, the kings are gone;
New creeds have crumbled—but the dream lives on!

JOAN CARSON

Joseph Auslander

Whose Marbles Are Stars, Not Wagons

IRENE MAHONEY

“**A**S LONG as we have our poets we need not tremble at the crunch of the boot of the dictator.”

Joseph Auslander in being a poet subjects the man to the vocation and in so doing sees almost with the eyes of a demi-god. He can understand all things but passivity. Even when he has fallen from exhaustion with “bandaged fists dull red from beating doors” he will lash his soul with questions that cannot be answered; and in his hand the whip is always lead-tipped, cutting with brutal force against his ignorance and despair. And when, still bruised, he can begin to creep again, he will tear with unhealed hands at stone and mortar and sink the wounds deep in brine.

At the recent convention of the National Council of Teachers of English, he denounced the use of poetry as a vehicle for propaganda. “I will not hitch my star to a wagon.” He is passionately loyal to the classic tradition, a fact which only increases his individuality among his propagandist contemporaries. He is essentially and, therefore, peculiarly universal rather than American in his love of liberty and tempestuous hatred of oppression. In very few poems does he state positively his credo but because of his wild ecstasy over all things free he becomes consciously associated with them. With

“These are the wounds too strong for stopping,
These are the wounds that must not heal;

JOSEPH AUSLANDER

The heart's blood of the martyr dropping
Under the tyrant's chariot wheel."

he is Demosthenes; never oblivious of the rankling torture of dictatorship and servitude.

In only two poems does he completely subject himself to the unguided rigor of "modern" verse. "Steel", a poem of steel mills and steel workers, is grimly effective and we can still find atoms of the poet's feeling half-buried under furnace dust and fluid steel. It is stark with brute pain and force.

"Then screwed the hose to the spigot, drowned
in steam,
Darted back when the rods kicked up a stream
Of fluid steel and had to duck the ladle that
slobbered over, and scream
Your throat raw to get your 'Goddam'
through."

The desolation is mitigated by a hungry yearning for dreams.

"The flags of a lonely little woman twisted
Out of her hunger for cool clean beauty, her
hunger for white!—

These were her banners, and this was her fight."

"Knockout" is, however, entirely modern and entirely brutal. Our senses are unspared, our intellects untouched. It is clever in a crude, sordid manner. The banalities of sunsets are preferable to using poetry as a vehicle for expressing the coarseness of the prize-ring. The greatest possible compliment is to say that the whole tone is obviously strained. It is apparent and fortunate that this is not Mr. Auslander's medium. He cannot afford to cast off his dreams.

The majority of his poetry is stately and graceful with

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a delicate finesse. He is erect and penetrating without the need of becoming a swaggering modern. The accusation that his poetry is an expression of "crystallized bitterness" is easily refuted by a reference to "Pentecost".

"Into our dreamless misery intrudes
A grace as strong as starlight in the air,
A music pure as the beatitudes."

Under his technique mythological allusions cease to be such—Pegasus ceases to be a dust-covered reference to Greek myths and becomes Pegasus, the reality—the winged-horse of all time. Never are his poems dull—misty with shadow.

"It seemed that I
Had somehow come nearer
Beast and sky:
I seemed to see clearer
With fog standing by."

There is a singing cadence and a radiant color which is never incongruous with the subject. Even when he is playing with "pretty" material there is a spontaneous virility which saves him from being studiously whimsical. "Encounter with Keats" abounds in the sense imagery which is so redolent of the subject.

"Autumn with hot coppery hair,
And heavy lids and heavy mouth,
And sunburnt throat and bosom bare
And brown and bright as the breasts of Ruth,
Still kneels in that corn-dusty air
And shakes a gold-flecked longing south."

Padraic Colum says of him: "he is a troubadour who has not forgotten the old songs but who heard the nightingale only last night."

JOSEPH AUSLANDER

In "Letters to Women" he has placed the childwise Virginia Clemm among his idolized Amy Lowell, Emily Dickinson and Eleanora Duse. He restores to her the personality which had been largely consumed by the passion-mad efforts of her husband to keep her always alive. Because she loved him without trying to understand she knew him best of all—

" this man with eyes
Like fire, this whimsical Lucifer,
Wings dipped in blood, mouth sick and wise
With desperate Paradise."

There is no possible transition from the tiny, bird-like Virginia Clemm to the searching recluse, Emily Dickinson except in the author's understanding. They were souls lonely, free to wonder in rebellion and then jerked back with a torturing wrench—bound fast to love and fear. The former unable to cup into her simple, child-like heart the whole of the adored, fantastic Poe,

"Whose heart was its own bitter hell
Feeding, consuming him, whose brow
Was the fixed seat of ghosts that dwell
Always with Israfel."

His poem to Emily Dickinson is a compassionate letter of understanding. He is contemptuous of the superficial criticism of a blithely uncomprehending world.

"They could not know you tall and risen
Nor understand how tight a prison
The world can build with liberty."

However, it is more a pitying than a vitriolic contempt for those who sighed—

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" how much she missed
The lovelorn sentimentalist!
You who were filled; who broke the bread
Of dew and stardust and were fed;"

The feeling of kinship between the two poets presents us with a more comprehensible view of the enigmatical, remote Miss Dickinson through the spirit of the less obscure Mr. Auslander. The rebellious recluse with her puritanical background becomes more the silent Emily with "shy feet of loneliness". Her lines

"I shall not feel at home
I know,
I don't like Paradise."

become less cryptic.

Mr. Auslander has a heritage he must not forfeit. The Greek tradition is basic to his poetry. He has built a temple on a high hill. It is Janus-faced. He who comes to worship must be conscious of reality which is sordid and beauty which is also real—and then turning see loveliness, silver-meshed and spindle-slender, unbroken by reality. The columns are Ionic, embellished only with Acanthus leaves. They were carved by a man with powerful hands—life glowing vibrant in his fingertips. And if his palms become too cloyed with silver star-dust to carve with power, he turns and lets reality lick them clean.



The Fire Has Gone Out . .

burnt away to dust

DOROTHY ZWIER

I AM Maryanne. Tonight the deadness of ten thousand years has brushed its weary weight against my brow and through my hair and down my back. I have grown wild with the wickedness and rebellion of all the world.

My every sense is dumb with frozen, sad despair. I can no longer feel a pain, a horror, a defeat unkind. My heart is charred so that desire will ever be supine. The wind is whipping my skirt about my legs. The door of the shack is forlornly banging, thudding to and fro. That is the only sound. All else is dead.

My husband is dead. My son is dead. My aunt is dead. The house is black and dead. One bare side of it is leaning up, sombre, stark, alone. Even the baby maple tree has a jagged silhouette; most of its life has been burnt away to dust. I must not look at the flagstone before the bottom step . . . the bottom step where we used to sit in the summer night's sweet-warm, earthly darkness . . . there is no bottom step. It crashed beneath the axe.

You heard it crash. Yes, I heard it . . . I heard the roof split tumbling down. . . . I heard the shriek of the fire engine coming down the road . . . our country lane. . . . I can hear my son's frenzied, wondering, agonized cry. I can hear the short panting, quick rasping breath of my husband. His hands were so gentle, his eyes deep brown.

My eyes hurt from my looking. Sweet God, give me strength! Those flames, and that roaring, the heat and the

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smoke. Now such quiet, so cold and so still. Dear God, we did nothing, nothing, do You hear? That this must come to pass . . . no one left but the bearded old man and me. . . .

I'm crying. I'm weak, I know. Once I could have rung dry and dustless each brilliant, curling flame with my naked, aching hands. I can't stand up any more. O, earth, you are hard and unyielding; bitter too, to my grief. We were going to plant crocuses, tulips, to come up in the spring . . . red poppies by our door and larkspur in the back. Near the well. Now on your breast drift the ashes of John and Aunt May. And into you, into you, they're going to put my love.

Old man, old uncle, why did you come? To see once again the results, the destruction that's been done? Do not tremble . . . oh, yes, it's just the cold . . . yes, I'm all right; I'm getting up; I just stopped—to fix my shoe. Button up your coat; you'll get chilled. You should not have left the Anderson's in this middle of the night. They will wonder, will worry where you've gone. Do not weep, dear uncle, please. See, lean on your cane, and we'll take each other's arms. There. Now we'd better go back. For we must start over once again. You and I. So we'll walk down the road to the Anderson's house. Maybe we'll have some tea, and then we can sit and watch together, watch over our beloved.

We're going very slowly . . . all right, we'll stop. What's that? Voices, you say? No, not now, but yes, back at the house—no, uncle, no, when they are gone they do not come back! Please, it's just the wind. We must walk on. Why, look, uncle, the dawn is almost come . . . over beyond the hill. But we mustn't look back. For our happiness is behind us; but some contentment must be there, round the curve, and up the hill!

May? oh, I don't think she knew a thing, dear . . . nor

make her
see shadow
think it's her
husband
(uncle)

where
did
delete space
the
motivation

THE FIRE HAS GONE OUT

little John, either. It was too swift, too final, too fierce to have let them suffer even enough to know. . . . Stop again? Here's a rock where we can rest. We'll sit a while together.

They said it was the chimney . . . defective . . . smoldering slow for many days. Then it came of a sudden, in the quiet of the night. He tried to get up to her and the little one too. But it spread so fast from the very center of the house that he fell with the burning staircase. . . . They helped you and me . . . in the kitchen . . . the back didn't burn. Just the center of the house. Just the heart of the house.

The sky is turning pale. And the wind is dying from the clouds. See the last star? Wish, uncle, wish so hard. . . . Dear Lord, never let him guess what it was like. Bless him in his deafness and his trusting, near-blind eyes. Help me to help him, Lord. And Thank You for the strength You sent me, hidden in the cloak of his disguise.

Come, once more down the road. We haven't far to go. The road is getting smoother, the light a little brighter, and your hand and mine are warming together. We will keep that warmth never, never to let it go. For that is all we have, now that the fire has gone out. . . .



Unrecompensed

Once—sated with grey light of public day
I closed my eyes and thought the world was dead
And I, yet living, was alone.
Fear-laden, I thought that I at last
Could cry my terror to the lifeless universe
With no dull shapes of listeners
To rise like fog and drink my broken whisperings.
But when I screamed,
Druid-like, unchanged they rose—invincible,
While choked with breath
I murmured “. . . lonesome . . . tired. . . .”
And watched them sink, waiting, upon their haunches. . . .
Then sure at last
I knew that there was only loneliness
Unrecompensed by being quite alone.

IRENE MAHONEY

February Rain

O Orphan of the Spring, why have you come
When Nature has not yet her summons given?
Why beat you down, relentlessly hum-drum,
Why knock at Earth's door, having fled from Heaven?
Too long, you say, you've waited for the Spring;
Too long pent up to give the cold snow sway—
Come forth then, rain, without a heralding,
For snow and wintry sleet have had their day.

Yet Rain, we too have known long Winter's woe;
We craved for Spring, its startling verdancy—
We begged that sorrows melt like tired snow
And longed for joy, with fickle constancy.
Hail Symbol of a dawn, a hope, a Spring!
Come, early Rain—aglow with promising.

CATHERINE RICKERT

Returning

My ship flies on the wings of night
Through the waves of an endless sea;
And my soul soars with the speed of light
Across the world to thee.

I have sailed with the tides of the blue-gray deep
That is stamped with Mahomet's seal;
I have brandished my sword where the pharaohs sleep
And gold have I won with steel.

I have filled my hold with the jewels of the East,
And the riches of all the world,
But my heart has commanded the search to be ceased
And has ordered my sails unfurled.

My ship has fled from the lonely strand
And is racing the stars above.
I have won the wealth of another land
To lay at thy feet, my love.

RUTH FOX

Villain's Villainy Men of letters are not always honest

CHARLOTTE MIETZELFELD

A PERSONAL acquaintance with that sardonic and highly cultivated sense of humor invariably attributed to the devil by those who advocate a happy journey on the road to ruin is surely the most alluring of all rewards of evil. The belief is common among the more irreverent and less knowing of our over-educated contemporaries that the unholy section of the angels has twice as much fun as its worthier but presumably duller half.

But they err in failing to realize that the pleasure of a thoughtfully and humorously executed crime comes far more fully to the discriminating observer than to the worried criminal. The outrageousness of the villain's villainy is the most ingratiating part of his charm. Only where he succeeds in the difficult task of being charmed with himself has he the joy of untroubled contemplation granted to the non-active, non-evil, but appreciative connoisseur of all that is happily wicked.

Kindly by nature, though unconcerned, this latter and luckier human would prefer his evils uncolored by violence or hurt. He is most highly pleased by a very bare-faced or an exceedingly subtle deception. Forgery consequently amuses him. Explanations in themselves are stories of the more elevating characters in the history of the literary hoax.

Shakespeare teachers as a general rule have familiarized their students with at least the outline of the admirable career of William Henry Ireland.

VILLAIN'S VILLAINY

The primrose path for this unhappy youth was thoroughly paved with good intentions. His father, an antiquarian London book-binder and engraver, was on the subject of Shakespeare that which is expressively if non-technically known as a "nut". After years of watching Ireland the Elder dispense his none-too-abundant funds on such touching relics as an old and trembling chair in which the venerable William supposedly once sat, young Ireland, apprenticed to a lawyer, chanced one day on a blank page in a seventeenth-century rent-roll, and carefully and generously made out on it a lease between a "John Heminge" and the home-loving W.S.

Ireland the Elder took the parchment to the office of heralds, who approved it. This was not surprising, as his thoughtful son had filched an old seal from his employer, reset it, and rubbed the crack with charcoal.

The inventive juvenile informed his parent that the lease was a gift from an elderly and anonymous acquaintance met in a coffee-house. Spurred on by utter kindness, he produced in rapid succession letters to Queen Elizabeth, to the Earl of Southampton, and to Anne Hathaway, all from Shakespeare; then manuscripts to various plays, including a page or two from "Hamlette"; and then a profession of faith, settling forever the question of whether or not Shakespeare had had any leanings toward Catholicism.

Of this document the ecclesiastical and scholarly Dr. Warton declared, "Sir, we have many beautiful passages in our Litany, and in many parts of the New Testament, but this great man has out-distanced them all."

It is quite probable that Ireland at this time spent much of his day gazing awe-struck into a mirror. By the word of the Anglican church, not only was he at the age of

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eighteen acceptable as Shakespeare—he was better than the Bible!

His self-confidence built up to inspiring heights, he retired into seclusion for a while, emerged hastily, and produced for an electrified world a play of Shakespeare's hitherto unknown. This travesty of genius he entitled "King Vortigern". Men of letters thronged to the Ireland shop, where they were graciously allowed to view what they would. The good James Boswell, overcome with reverence, fell on his knees before "the invaluable relics of our bard", and in an ecstasy of appreciation turned faint.

"King Vortigern", however, aroused some discussion. Even for those Wishful Thinkers of whom literary enthusiasts form so large a proportion, it was a large bite, and for some of the more skeptical it became the starting point for a field day of savagely destructive criticism.

Richard Sheridan wished to produce the play, and wanted John Philip Kemble to take the lead. Kemble refused flatly unless it were produced on April Fool's Day. So on the first of April, 1797, Kemble and Mrs. Jordan played Vortigern and Rowena before the packed house in the Drury Lane Theatre. Not half way through the play Kemble, who was doing a magnificent job of burlesque, quoted in a tragic roar the disastrous line ascribed to Vortigern—"I would this solemn mockery were o'er!" The audience up till then had been docile, if uneasy. Now, with a howl of delight, they rose to their feet in one concerted lunge. The curtain rang down, and Ireland's career was over.

In the interests of the moral, it might be admitted that he died in humdrum poverty. For the satisfaction of the humorist, however, it must be told that for a time he lived

VILLAIN'S VILLAINY

quite comfortably on the income from selling forgeries of his forgeries.

Less sensational, more credible, and yet composed with a plaintive gentility that necessarily forces them entrance into this list of remarkable wrongs are the works of James MacPherson. This scholarly gentleman claimed to have spent years collecting and translating ancient Gaelic manuscripts in the Scotch highlands. These he pieced together into a coherent romance, and published as the "Works of Ossian", a supposititious third-century bard.

Ossian at first was accepted without question. Byron, Napoleon, and Chateaubriand praised him fervently. Goethe had his "Werther" prefer Ossian to Homer. Most touching, however, of all tributes to the Celtic and highly fictional bard was the ceremonial held by the literary females in the acquaintance of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu. Dedicated to beauty and simplicity, these saintly characters, dubbed Bluestockings by derisive Londoners, gathered together and in a reverent and emotional silence drank a toast from a sea-shell to the venerable Bard.

But this quick flood of literary appreciation was not without its undercurrent of opposition. Dr. Johnson accused MacPherson of having found only fragments of manuscript and of having invented the rest. Uncomplimentary appellations were flung back and forth as the two quarreled bitterly. But the blow that must have given the ancient Ossian the most painful turn in his grave was Elizabeth Barrett Browning's unfeeling statement that "Homer sometimes nods, but Ossian makes one nod."

Yet this was unduly cruel, for MacPherson, though he failed to produce any manuscripts, insisted upon the genuineness of Ossian with a tenacity one can only admire, and

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as a consequence his never-existent bard carried the first blazing light of the Romantic movement in Europe.

Without a touch of the genius demonstrated in the masterly if fraudulent works of the Ossianic MacPherson, but far more endearing by reason of his carelessly unconcerned and almost idiotic audacity, was one Vrain-Denis Lucas, most prolific and probably most amusing of all the amazing gallery of calligraphical frauds in history.

Imaginative, industrious, magnificently untouched by common sense, Lucas was quite probably intended by a sardonic but kindly Maker partly for purposes of amusement, and partly to give an over-pompous scientific world a needed understanding of itself as human, fallible, and sometimes rather ridiculous.

Overcome by the urge to counterfeit the great of the ages, Lucas took unto himself the most appreciative, most credulous, and most foolish patron he could uncover. This was—and here we have the overwhelming ace in the hand of the mocking gods—the noted astronomer and mathematician, Michel Chasles. Then he proceeded to write letters. After eight years, he had written twenty-seven thousand letters, and had sold them—the whole staggering, stupendous lot—to the admiring and grateful M. Chasles.

These letters were written all in French, all on regulation French paper; and they were all in the unmistakable and undisguised hand of the untiring Lucas himself. For them, Chasles paid a total of one hundred and forty thousand francs.

Why?

Because he believed to the depths of his mathematical, reverent, and gullible heart that the letters were written by such an odd assortment of obviously impossible correspon-

VILLAIN'S VILLAINY

dents as Galileo, Newton, Shakespeare, Plato, Attila, Pompey, Charlemagne, and Alexander the Great!

When the trusting M. Chasles began to doubt, Lucas, in the type of gesture which makes his kind so dear, offered cheerfully to buy the twenty-seven thousand missives back. Convinced, M. Chasles apologized and accepted without a murmur such blasphemies as the epistles (written still in French, still in the same hand) from Cleopatra to Julius Caesar; from the King of Macedonia to Aristotle; from Mary Magdalene to the Risen Lazarus; and from the Risen Lazarus to Saint Peter.

Suspicious of donations offered by Chasles, the French Academy of Sciences finally ordered an investigation of the false documents. Incredibly, it took the learned gentlemen two years to condemn them, and then only after Sir David Brewster had pointed out with infinite patience that a letter presumably written on the law of gravitation by Pascal to Newton was dated at a time when Newton, discoverer of the law, was barely and youthfully ten!

Hurt and confused, M. Chasles returned to his telescope. Richer, Lucas retired.

There are endless additions to this list of winsome wickedness. But the most fitting conclusion to their recital is surely Shakespeare's immortal lines,

"Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray?"

The reason it is fitting is that they are not Shakespeare's lines at all.

Candle Light

Tower of David, ivory white—
Tall and slender, candle height—
Waxen pure, house of gold—
Fashioned in a perfect mold—
Inviolable candle, ivory tower—
Prudent, wise with virgin power.
Fused with flame, with fire wed—
Impassioned yet not passion-red—
Whitened heat, the spirit's fire
Union that fulfills desire—
Mater Christi—radiant bright—
A flaming candle giving Light.

IRENE MAHONEY

You Who Are So Wise

You who are so wise, tell me—what is pain?
A memory, now deeply hid, which ne'er can be again?
A sound of laughter in a room, a small, unconquered sigh?
A rose once blooming in a field, fresh-plucked and left
to die?
A choir on a rainy eve? A whistle in the morn?
A tiny whimper in a room, a baby yet unborn?
The rosary of death in hands once warm, now hard and cold,
A house that knew the touch of life, now standing lone
and old?
Or tears? A drop of rain? The emptiness to love in vain?
You who are so wise, tell me—what is pain?

AUDREY LESLIE

Lucky Imp

How much a birthday meant

CECILY ENGELHARDT

IT WAS a hot night—close and suffocating. Not a breath of air stirred the cheap curtains that hung limp on the narrow window. Ann lay still and stared up at the low, cracked ceiling in the little box of a room. A few times she attempted to brush back wisps of hair from her moist forehead, but each time she let her hand fall back on to the bed. It was too hot even to move.

She wondered how much longer she would be able to go on like this? How much more could she stand? Three years now. Three years since she had said for better or for worse. The first two years, which were supposed to be the hardest for everybody else, had been the better part for them. The last . . . the last had been one long intolerable nightmare. . . .

That summer of nineteen thirty-six seemed a long way off now. That summer when everyone was dancing to "Robins and Roses" and singing "Small Hotel." That summer when a tiny slip of a girl called Ann had stood next to a tall, gay young fellow, Jeff, and in a quivering voice had murmured "I do."

She smiled a little when she remembered how she had felt. She must have looked as frightened too. For she remembered Jeff taking her hand in his and whispering, "You're not scared are you, Imp. You know you can still change your mind." But she had just smiled up at him and answered. "No, I'll never change my mind about you, Jeff—ever."

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And she knew now just as she knew then that she would always love Jeff no matter what. And she knew too that she would never forget that day—that beautiful, gorgeous, exciting day when she had become Mrs. Geoffrey Winters. She remembered every little precious moment of it—every little thing Jeff said. Absurd silly little things like “You know Mrs. Jeff, you’re the prettiest of my seventeen wives. Well—the tiniest anyway. And let me tell you something, Imp, you’re an awfully lucky girl to get a fellow like me.”

But she couldn’t think any more now—not about the past anyway. It held too many bitter sweet memories. Besides she was getting nervous. Where was Jeff? She reached for the clock. A quarter of twelve. A quarter of twelve—and still no Jeff. Tonight wasn’t going to be any different then—even though it was her birthday. Tonight, was going to be just like all the other nights for the past year. She couldn’t understand Jeff any more. He just wasn’t the Jeff she had married.

She remembered their whole life had begun to change about a month after he had had the argument with Johnson, the Day City editor. He had been fired. It wasn’t his fault but Johnson wouldn’t admit it at the time. Editors never humbled themselves. He ought to know that. But Jeff was stubborn.

And that night—a month after he had lost his job, he had come home and had put ten five dollar bills on the table before her. That was the beginning. “Here, Imp,” he said, “buy yourself an orchid.”

Ann remembered she had been so excited that she had bubbled over. She wouldn’t give him a chance to speak. Instead she had said, “Wait, Jeff, don’t tell me. I know.”

LUCKY IMP

You went to see Johnson, and he said he was sorry. He said you were the best reporter in the City. He said without you, the paper was falling to pieces. He said here's fifty dollars Winters, report on . . ."

But Jeff had interrupted then. "Just a minute honey—not so fast," he said. "I didn't go to see Johnson."

"But, Jeff—Kenneth said that he'd be only too glad and willing to give you your job back—if you'd only go down to the office and see him."

"I wouldn't go to see Johnson if he were the last editor in New York and he begged me to take a job at five hundred a week."

"Not even for me—Jeff?"

"No, Ann, not for anybody. He fired me for getting the paper involved in a libel suit. Only I didn't—he did. I just reported the story. He published it. Nope, Mr. Johnson can stay where he is, and I'll stay here."

"But Jeff—if he didn't give you the money, where did you get it?"

"Oh, I met some of the fellows downtown. We had a little game of cards—I was just lucky I guess."

"But, Jeff, you mean you won that money gambling? Oh, no, Jeff—not gambling, that's awful."

"It's only awful the way you make it sound. We have to have money, don't we? You need a new coat, don't you? I saw the way your mother stared at you with that I-pity-you-my-poor-little-girl look."

"Jeff, she didn't. She just felt sorry that we weren't getting along quite so . . ."

"Yes, she was sorry all right. Sorry that you married shiftless, flighty, irresponsible Geoffrey Winters. You're sorry yourself but you won't admit it. You . . ."

THE QUARTERLY

"Jeff—."

"Yes—."

"Jeff, I've been sorry about a lot of things in my life. But Jeff—I've never been sorry I married you."

Ann remembered Jeff had come over to her then. He had suddenly become so humble, and that wasn't like him.

It wasn't just what he said. It was the way he looked when he said, "I'm sorry, Imp. I deserve to be horsewhipped for talking to you like that. Here," he said, handing her the electric iron, "next time let me have it.—But honest, Imp, there won't be a next time."

But there was. There was a next time, and a time after that, and after that again. Jeff would go out early in the morning, and most of the time he didn't come back until the next morning. In the beginning Ann asked questions. "Where were you so late, Jeff?" "Did you get a job?" But Jeff almost always became sullen, so after that she didn't ask any more questions. And he didn't say anything either.

The only thing that seemed to delight him was to buy her expensive presents. But whenever he came home with something new she got a little sick. He hadn't found a job. But he *had* been gambling again.

She became so disturbed that one day when he came with an expensive fur jacket they really couldn't afford, she refused it.

He grew white when she gave it back to him. But all he said was "You don't have to be afraid to wear it. It's genuine." He went out then before she could explain. He never mentioned it again.

Suddenly she stopped reminiscing. It was getting later. She could feel that it was. Now there was only an occasional click of heels on the pavement below, and it was a long while

LUCKY IMP

ago since someone had said goodnight. She switched on the light and reached for the clock again. Twelve-thirty. "Well—I guess I just don't matter to Jeff any more," she thought. She tried to smile—it wasn't easy. Her birthday was over now. But she didn't care. Well not really—anyway.

As she was turning off the lamp she picked up once more the birthday card her mother had sent her. *She* hadn't forgotten. "Darling," it said, "have a lovely birthday." In it was a check for twenty-five dollars. "Buy yourself something nice." Ann got a lump in her throat then. "Mothers aren't supposed to forget your birthday ever," but she sobbed into her pillow, "Husbands aren't supposed to either."

The next morning the sun shone brightly in the window. It was the beginning of another hot and sultry day. Ann got out of bed, slipped into her faded blue dressing gown and went over to lower the shade. On her way back she looked at Jeff sleeping so soundly. She wanted to shake him. Instead, she got her towel and soap and decided to take her shower before Mrs. Bronson's other boarders all had the same thought.

Ann could never quite get used to this idea of living in a boarding house. But even that had been fun at first. As a matter of fact everything had been fun—until lately. But now all these same things, these very same people seemed suddenly repulsive to her. For things were different now. She supposed you could call it one of those things that happen overnight—the proverbial last straw. Only it was a forgotten birthday this time.

All in a day she had become twenty-one, she had cried more than a little, and she had made a decision. An important one. She was going to leave Jeff. She was taking a chance. But it was worth it. If he came after her, he would

THE QUARTERLY

be the Jeff she married, the Jeff she wanted. If he didn't? But that was an unbearable thought, so she dismissed it from her mind and turned on the shower.

"Dear Jeff," she wrote, "I'm leaving you." It looked so strange written down like that—so cold and so unlike herself. "I can't go on like this any longer." It might sound melodramatic but she couldn't help it. She looked at the clock. It was nine-thirty. Jeff had left her exactly one hour and fifteen minutes ago. He had kissed her goodbye, lightly. He didn't know it might be the last time he'd ever kiss her. But she just couldn't tell him. She would probably start to cry and say "Forget it, Jeff. I don't mean what I'm saying. It's just this awful heat." And then it would start all over.

She didn't want it to start all over. So she wrote, "I'm going to stay at mother's until I think things out. And, Jeff," she added, "don't come after me. I don't want you—as you are. Really I mean it." She simply signed it "Ann." She tucked it in the corner of the mirror on the old brown bureau where he'd be sure to find it, gathered up her gloves and bag, looked once quickly about the room, then went out.

Ann stood in front of the long oval mirror. She brushed her already smooth hair, touched the lipstick once more to her scarlet mouth, and stared hard at herself. "You fool," she thought, "You're really such a fool, Ann. Six months ago you had such ideas—brilliant you thought them. And now look at you—the pretty unattached Mrs. Winters they call you. You are unattached, you know—you'll always be without Jeff." She turned from the mirror because her reflection was so painfully revealing.

"But smile," she went on, "smile because you don't

LUCKY IMP

care if you ever have Jeff again—you like it here. You don't have to worry about a husband who stays out night and day, a sullen discontented husband who tries to appease you with expensive gifts. A husband who doesn't even remember your birthday. There's a party downstairs now—a party for you. So smile and act gay and be charming. For your mother's sake anyway. Act as if you never knew a bronze-skinned boy named Jeff—act as if—oh please, please don't let me torture myself any further," she prayed as she gathered up her evening bag and fled downstairs.

It was a lovely party and she was dancing with someone. She wasn't quite sure who it was, but it didn't really matter. The music was lovely. It was soft, and sweet, and suggestive of moonlight and gardens. She guessed she was getting sentimental or something, for even that tall young man coming toward her reminded her of Jeff. He had such broad shoulders and he swung along with an easy grace.

Heavens, was she stark raving mad! It can't be, she thought. But it is. It is Jeff, it is! Shall I run or scream or cry or what—What shall I do? Then there seemed to be a lull, and everything was dark and unfamiliar. That is everything except a strong husky voice saying something about cutting in. She was quickly shifted from one pair of arms to another. Then—

"Hello Mrs. Winters—this is your husband Jeff—remember?"

"Hello, Jeff."

"Oh, you do remember. Well that's fine. Now that you know who I am we're off to a good start. Come outside," he said, indicating the terrace; "I want to get a good look at you."

They walked out side by side, silently. Ann suddenly

THE QUARTERLY

felt uncomfortable, like a young girl at her first dance. When they reached outside, they sat down on a bench and he turned about and faced her. "Well, Mrs. Winters," he continued, "I see the better life agrees with you. You like ease and comfort don't you? You never really went for that starving in the attic stuff, did you?"

"Jeff, please don't. What are you doing here?"

"Oh, I just read in the papers that a party was being given in honor of my wife. And I thought that since I was still your husband—I am you know—I'd come down and have a look around. And then, too, I suppose I was curious to see how you were looking. And now I'm satisfied. You're looking swell."

"You're not looking so well, Jeff," she whispered in a tight voice. "You've gotten thinner, haven't you?"

"Oh, I suppose I did lose some weight. You know, Ann, it's kind of a jolt to have your wife leave you for bigger and better things."

"Jeff, that's not true. You know it isn't."

"No?"

"No." Ann had intended to stop at that. But she looked at him and he sat there so mocking and cold that she went on. "Listen to me, Geoffrey Winters. You know I didn't want to come back here. You knew I loved you so much that I didn't miss anything else. To be with you had always been enough for me. But apparently the same can't be said of you. You loved me so much that you stayed out day and night. You gambled. You didn't—You didn't even come home on my birthday." She was sobbing now, so he grasped her tenderly by the shoulders.

"Listen, Ann," he said, "I stayed out night and day, sure I did. In the day I looked for work. In the night I—I

LUCKY IMP

gambled, yes. But if I didn't, I wouldn't have been able to buy you anything. We could just about barely live and eat on the money we had in the bank—and even that was going fast. You know that.”

“Yes, but Jeff, I didn't want money—or those things. I left you because—well among other things you didn't come home the one night I was sure you would. I was so disappointed in you, Jeff—oh, so very disappointed.”

“But do you know why I didn't come home? I didn't come because I couldn't bring you anything. I wanted to buy you something nice—something really nice—like what you used to have. I kept thinking I'd win. But all the time it was getting later. I just wasn't lucky that day—all the way around I guess.”

“But, Jeff, I didn't want anything—not that way, anyway. If you had just said something. If you had just said ‘Happy Birthday—Imp’ that would have been enough. But what's the use? It's all over now.”

“But is it all over?”

“Well—Well do you want it—Do you want it to be all over, Jeff?”

“No, I don't,” he fairly shouted, as he gathered her in his arms. “It'll never be over with us honey.”

“I've always known that, Jeff,” she murmured as she pressed her face against his coat. “You see I'm one up on you.”

“But you know this, darling? I've got my job back. I'm a respectable man again—no staying out, no gambling, no—”

“Oh, Jeff, you're wonderful. Jeff, I love you so. But you said you wouldn't do it for anybody—not even for me.”

THE QUARTERLY

"I didn't do it for you. I did it for somebody who wasn't just anybody."

"Oh, Jeff, I don't know what to say."

"Let me tell you then, Imp."

"Wait, let me tell you, Jeff. I'll always remember this. So let me say it. I know—," she whispered softly, "that I'm the prettiest of your seventeen wives—Right? Well, the tiniest anyway. And let me tell you something else, Mr. Geoffrey Winters. I'm an awfully lucky girl to have a fellow like you."

Perfectionest

O pale and lofty city of my dreams
Along whose boulevards no mortal roams,
I have come back to where the star-light gleams
On ivory arches and on silver domes.
Here Silence reigns,—no laughter and no grief;
From empty porticos tall columns rise
Whereon is carved the curled acanthus leaf,—
Perfection beyond question or surmise.

Twice I have come, and twice have bent to look
In pools of night where frosted petals float,
Unwritten pages of Perfection's book,
Then felt Despair's cold fingers at my throat
To see within the pool no faint reflection.
It cannot mirror less than its Perfection.

JOAN CARSON

Translation

. . . . of fantastical half-truth

GRACE LUND

PROLOGUE

On the evening of the first day of June, 1593, Christopher Marlowe, dramatist, was murdered by one Ingram Frizer in the Inn at Deptford, a suburb of London. The exact circumstances are open to conjecture. . . .

CHARACTERS

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE—aged twenty-nine—at the beginning of his career.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE—the same age. An established dramatist and poet—a menace to Elizabethan peace.

INGRAM FRIZER—Who knows how much he was involved?

A BARMAID.

Scene: Public room of the inn at Deptford.

Time: The first of June, 1593. Early evening.

There is but one occupant of the room—a young man, modestly dressed in the Elizabethan fashion. He is seated at a small table before the low fire, finishing his meal. He eats slowly, seeming to absorb the surroundings with his quiet, thirsting glance, his heed of the birds' nocturnal chatter, and his apparent awareness of the dew-laden breezes blowing through an open casement. By his quiet observation he seems to draw a great deal from life while giving little in return but his attention and appreciation. This is the young Shakespeare.

THE QUARTERLY

(Enter maid to set another dish before him.)

SHAKESPEARE (*looking up*):

London is emptied well of play'rs by now
The plague has driv'n the bees from 'customed sweets.
They scatter like dry leaves before a wind
To every shire and hamlet hereabout.

MAID:

Surely the plague is horrible, my lord;
God's wrath, some calls it, on the atheists.
I spoke of it a moment hence upstairs
To one of the guests lodging here tonight.
I told him Black Death was God's judgment dark
On mortals. "God's judgment!" He laughed at me.
"It's fools' judgment on filthy fools," he said.
"What care hath a great bodiless idea
Of mortals? God! A fleshless fantasy!"

SHAKESPEARE:

Sounds like Kit Marlowe.

MAID:

Marlowe he is, sir.
His fellow at backgammon called him that.

SHAKESPEARE:

Kit Marlowe here? What fellow plays with him?

MAID:

I never saw the like before this morn.
One sailed from the Low Countries to be here
For this mysterious meeting, so I heard.
Three came together—Marlowe came alone.
They talked all forenoon and long aft outside
Betwixt themselves and young Lord Marlowe, sir.
The three seem pitted strong against the one;

TRANSLATION

A triangle bent on a single point.
Can aught but evil come of such converse?
I fear me peril hangs above the house.

SHAKESPEARE:

Such small fears. Belike you were out too late
Beneath the cold, white moon that glowed last night.
Queer, how the moon may stir a mortal's heart
Whilst still remaining cold and unattached.

MAID:

Oh no, sir! I am telling only you
Because it seems so strange, and you player-folk
Know well the London life and London ways.

SHAKESPEARE:

And little more do players know, methinks.
Go now and fetch your Mr. Marlowe here—
Say Will Shakespeare is passing through the town.
Then bring in ale for kindred, warring souls.

(Exit maid)

I'd like to translate her to lines and cues;
Sincere she is, confiding, quickly, too.
Quickly! Her name could be that! Dame Quickly!
Perhaps I shall write her her own neat inn—
Let her consort with kings and princes then
And make a faithful husband of her love.
In good time. It will unspin while I live,
Translating as I go—translating truth.

(Enter Marlowe.)

Will Shakespeare! How fares plague-strick' London
now?

SHAKESPEARE *(rising and taking his hand)*:

Worse, Marlowe, worse. Each day more hundreds die.
It's ghastly to feel that souls flee unbled.
Ministers fear t'approach the stricken homes.

THE QUARTERLY

MARLOWE (*flinging himself into a chair*):

Ministers! They have no gifted pow'rs
To charm depraved souls into holiness.
Death is the end! Why pretend to prolong
The span of those so miserable dogs?
If ministers are hallowed why fear they
To enter in the dwellings claimed by death?

SHAKESPEARE:

Marlowe, you should fear for your life and soul
When you blaspheme God thus in these dire days.
Has not the breath of anti-atheism
Yet snuffed your fire or chilled your bravado?
The lower classes hang the blame on you
For all the baneful and malicious death.
God's wrath, they say.

MARLOWE:

Let God keep His wrath, then
And waste it not on one secured as I
By Government Connections! By the queen!

(*Maid enters with ale and the two drink.*)

MARLOWE (*becoming less intense*):

You'll fright yourself into a mood like Kyd's.
Who when the constables searched our room thrice
Did sleep with gun clasped tight within one hand
His Bible clutched in t'other—and dreamt not well;
Fearful lest I should slay him whilst he slept.
He thought of me as lurid and sanguine
As his own vengeful blood-drunk characters.

SHAKESPEARE:

Poor Kyd! His gory fantasies of doom
Must be begot in cheese-and-ale nightmares!

TRANSLATION

MARLOWE:

Holy idiot! Had he restrained his thirst
The theatre would have been lacking him.

SHAKESPEARE:

On such swaying jackstraws balances our fate—
Backgammon boards—a glass of ale, perhaps—
The incidents pile like bricks in a wall
Each held aloft by those laid down times past.
But tell me, Marlowe, what have you rolled there
So newly writ' that sand still clings to it?
Another overwhelming tragedy?
Great drama yet to smother my small ones?

MARLOWE:

Drama! Don't speak the gaudy word to me!
I'm through with it and in pay of the queen.
Yes, through with drama—and forever, Will.
Why should my life be sold before my eyes?
What gives the fickle audience in reward?
How much compensation from the comp'ny?
Drama is like a painted sea-snail's shell,
Its paltry heart rattling and dead within,
And no more life than rolled-up mummies boast.
Drama to me is set apart from life—
A pale, flat shadow, one-dimensional.
Plays are writ' by men prematurely laid
In ornate glass front coffins outside life.
What thrill remains there in the drama, Will?
It knows as much of life as I of death.

SHAKESPEARE:

Life? Drama is a bright echo of life
As nightingales are echoes still of love.
The theatre is full essence of life.

THE QUARTERLY

There lies life naked and sincere for you—
Cow'ring and paltry or magnificent.
The drama seems a human body, Kit
Excoriated with the heart exposed
And every precious secret of the soul
Laid candid there for judgment. It is so real
It oft' surpasseth far the thing it sought
To imitate. The depths revealed by art
Are so alive they pain like throbbing nerves
Of aching tooth touched inadvertently.

MARLOWE:

But personal gain, Will, remains there such?

SHAKESPEARE:

The pay sufficeth me, full well, God knows
And th'intangible gold that feeds the heart
Swells playwrights' poor organs to bursting nigh.
Have you never stood backstage at your plays
And watched the players go on—then did you pray?

MARLOWE:

Prayed? Not I! No mere God can help you then!

SHAKESPEARE:

And has your heart ne'er beat within your throat
For fear the groundlings never would be still?
Then when they were—did it cease suddenly
Whilst time and tide paused in eternity
And God frowned darkly on your presumption?
And then applause—while still you dared not breathe—
Tentative first like bashful summer rain,
Torrential soon, battering all your fears
The way a storm denudes a wide-eyed flow'r.

MARLOWE:

Then springs there up in patternless, quick growth

TRANSLATION

Hope unwarranted like sickly fungi
To be cruelly trampled on next day
And crushed beneath some stinking groundling's heel.
Mushrooms have feelings well as flow'rs, it seems.
Then too the indiscriminating play'rs.
Carry your play off as Jove did Io
And boast of it as theirs—not heeding you
Unless it be a failure, then comes back
Too soon their nagging acrimonious
Then it is *your* play—they abandon claim.
The stage is but an imitated life
And playwrights are the imitators! Bah!
I'd rather make life and rule *my* own fate
Than copy on pages the words of fools.

SHAKESPEARE:

But Kit! Playwrights' copying is true art!
Artists copy directly from nature—
Improvising as they see the picture.
So we playwrights at easels likewise sit
Depicting hearts and inmost minds of men
Instead of only features physical.
Oh, Marlowe, with your brilliance taught of God
Your poems should survive eternity.

MARLOWE:

Life is my ballad and life is my song.
My life is sufficient drama for me!
I'm not content to be the audience—
I'll *live* the glorious, flaming spectacle.

SHAKESPEARE:

And when you are dead who will lay your dust
With tears for one who has given them joy?
What relics will you leave behind you then
For England? For our queen invincible?

THE QUARTERLY

MARLOWE:

I aim to do more for the queen than plays—
I am essential to her majesty;
It's a precarious, glamorous path I tread
'Twixt intrigue here and foul designs abroad.
Drama is not adventure or romance,
Why not live, Will? The scarlet robe of fame
Consists in naught beside her gaudy name.

SHAKESPEARE:

Live? You mean start drinking and roistering?
Give up security, friendship and art?

MARLOWE:

Art?

SHAKESPEARE:

May slow succeeding generations
Debate the worth of this, your life, and mine.

MARLOWE:

Future praises or blame stir not the dead.
(*Marlowe begins unrolling his manuscript.*)
It is a song—an epic love-story.

SHAKESPEARE:

So poetry still claims your heart—say on.

MARLOWE:

No title shows it to the world but soon
When Queen Bess can dispense with me a time
I shall return to it and name it then.
The tale of Hero and Leander 'tis.
Dost thou recall the myth of priest and nun?

SHAKESPEARE:

Can't you leave even pagan religion
To its own blissful, unscorned ignorance?

TRANSLATION

MARLOWE:

For that which hath no being, do not mourn
Things that are not at all are never lost.

SHAKESPEARE:

This seems nearer your own true nature, Kit,
Than your tremendous tragedies of death.
But then, they are another side of you.
What a stupendous thesaurus you have
Of language and of merciless insight.

MARLOWE:

I need no aid from shabby players, Will.
My writing's mine. Harken these ringing words—
"He whom she favours lives, the other dies;
There might you see one sigh; another rage;
And some their violent passions to assuage
Compile sharp satire; but alas, too late!
For faithful love will never turn to hate
And many, seeing great princes were denied,
Pin'd as they went, and thinking on her died."

SHAKESPEARE:

When her majesty hear those 'sounding lines,
Marlowe, you'll be a knight and giv'n a shire—
Unless she be distraught or ill—then woe!
Your mad head will stay on by naught but chance.

MARLOWE:

My head's secure—it's fastened on with fear.
Elizabeth is loth to kill me now.
Mine are her secrets—my life is her charm.
Besides, my work is indispensable.
I'm calculating as a miser! Mad!

SHAKESPEARE:

A miser—drunk on pow'r like Jews on gold.

THE QUARTERLY

MARLOWE:

Listen—

“Relenting Hero’s gentle heart was strook
Such force and virtue hath an amorous look.
It lies not in our power to love or hate
For will in us is over-rul’d by fate.
When two are stript long. . . .”

SHAKESPEARE:

Marlowe, those lines are immortally great.
Read them again! It is not in our will. . . .

MARLOWE:

“It lies not in our power to love or hate
For will in us is over-rul’d by fate.”

SHAKESPEARE:

That’s everlasting as an axiom
Copied by generations of school-boys.
How fall such weighty words, Kit, from the scratch
Of an indifferent and fast-scrawling pen?

MARLOWE:

The words are mine not—they but come through me.
Don’t make me form dead rules at this late stage.
Rules bind one’s passion. I’m much better off
Writing when words come and cajoling not.
Sometimes when you write for mere money, Will,
Do you feel ever the depths of your soul
Being squeezed dry of song and life and breath?
What ’comes of dramatists with emptied hearts
When their souls bleed in ink and naught remains?

SHAKESPEARE:

Then they must shrivel like painted snake-skins;
But let the future sorrow for itself.
The adamantine destinies sway not.

TRANSLATION

MARLOWE:

"Adamantine destinies"—that's good, Will.

(*Writing it down.*)

SHAKESPEARE:

A fine pirating friend you are, Marlowe.

Above our life we love a *steadfast* friend.

MARLOWE:

That sounds good, too. Say it again. "Above—"

SHAKESPEARE:

Above our life we love a steadfast friend.

MARLOWE:

What rhymes with "friend", Will? My head whirls
to-night.

SHAKESPEARE:

"End", you robbing scoundrel. That poem is mine

As well as yours, by this time. I claim half.

MARLOWE:

I shall dedicate it on the first page

"To Master Will Shakespeare—the true image

And living proof of Hero." Comes your fame!

SHAKESPEARE:

You shall swagger through my play in exchange.

Perhaps "Il Capitano Moro" soon.

Would jealousy and swart'ness suit you, Kit?

MARLOWE:

If I'm dark-skinned put Cleopatra in

To match and I can while away dull scenes.

Of exposition you insist upon

In profitable leisure with la belle.

SHAKESPEARE:

No, I will write you in "Il Capitan"

And make you lover still, how strikes you that?

THE QUARTERLY

MARLOWE:

A little Spanish rattles so in you!
Had you gone to a university
Theatre-goers would need a glossary.
It's well for them you know sparse Latin, Will.
And less Greek. Stay within English, my friend.

SHAKESPEARE (*reading*):

"Day with his flaring beams mock'd ugly night
Till she, o'ercome with anguish, shame and rage,
Danged down to hell her loathsome carriage."
That sounds like Homer. Greatness rings in it!
When comes the time this work will be complete?
Delay it not, Marlowe, ill chance might come
Between your verse and you. Complete it now!

MARLOWE:

I am free, I repeat! Free! No fetters!
No chains bind me beside a dimlit desk.
Let others stammer my unspoken words—
I'll write and work and live just as I please!

SHAKESPEARE:

Please, Kit, finish it now, to-night—right here,
Heaven knows when you may get another chance.

MAN'S VOICE (*offstage*):

Marlowe!

MARLOWE:

Not now, Will, more important matters press.
Espionage is a thrilling mistress,
Ne'er twice the same—exciting as the queen.
Prestige and glory march proudly beside—
Walsingham treasures me like a rare jewel.
No one can touch me—not even your God.

TRANSLATION

SHAKESPEARE:

Tell me, Marlowe, who are the sin'ster men
Who came so far to meet but for a day?

MARLOWE:

They are cohorts in my exciting trade;
The merchants dealing in intrigue and death.

MAN'S VOICE (*offstage*):

Marlowe!

MARLOWE:

I'll come. Only a minute more!

Becalm your temper with a draught of ale.

(*Marlowe's back is turned to the door so he does not see
Ingram Frizer enter and listen.*)

This is my commerce, Will, my stock in trade.

I am espionage against those knaves

Though they think I work for their ends with them

I clutch them in my hand to break them soon—

So soon do I get word from Walsingham.

(*Shakespeare looks up at this moment and sees Frizer.
When the latter sees he has been perceived, he slips out the
door again.*)

SHAKESPEARE:

Marlowe!

MARLOWE:

Zounds, you exceed a rabbit in spirit!

If but the telling upsets your courage

What would the brave experience do to you?

SHAKESPEARE:

Understand me this once, Kit, you must stay!

Oh, for the love of God, don't go upstairs!

MARLOWE (*rising*):

God! You sound like a famished Carmelite!

THE QUARTERLY

God, God, God, from one hour's end t'another's.
God holds with me a-naught in common. God!

FRIZER (*calling from outside*):

Marlowe! Come upstairs! We're tired of waiting!

SHAKESPEARE:

Marlowe, believe me and don't trust those men!

MARLOWE:

Alone fools trust fools—I am wiser, Will.

SHAKESPEARE:

Be wary!

MARLOWE:

Wary? I?

SHAKESPEARE (*with resolution*):

Let me warn you!

MARLOWE:

Now I must leave. They will know they're betrayed.
If you must write, Will, why not try this form?
Pentameters flow like thawed streams in May.
Try a love epic in your prosy style.
Some great myth—Venus and Adonis. Try!
Farewell! We'll meet in London by next fall.

SHAKESPEARE:

God help you, Marlowe.

MARLOWE (*going out*):

God!

(*The maid enters and Shakespeare pays her for the meal.*)

MAID:

Is Master Marlowe out of harm, my lord?
He is so young—my fears perplexeth me.

SHAKESPEARE:

Marlowe requires no furrowed brows or tears

TRANSLATION

He is a sheet of flaming life. Headstrong
But wise enough to guard his fires well.
A boy in years, he is already man
In wisdom and a god in intellect.

MAID (*impressed*):

Yes, sir.

SHAKESPEARE:

Have my horse brought around. Distance still lies
Between me and my resting place to-night.

MAID:

Yes, sir.

*(The maid exits. Shakespeare rises and picks up his hat, then
notices the blank paper Marlowe has left.)*

SHAKESPEARE:

Kit Marlowe is profusely profligate
With his youth, with his work, his well-being
And his paper.

(Shakespeare gathers it up.)

MAID (*re-entering*):

Your horse is outside, sir.

*(At this moment comes a terrible scream—almost a prayer—
from upstairs):*

My God!

MAID (*clinging to Shakespeare's arm*):

My lord Marlowe! It's his voice! Murder! Help!

SHAKESPEARE (*after a moment's consideration*):

Fear not that it be Marlowe's prayer, my child,
Kit Marlowe is a god unto himself.

EXEUNT

CURTAIN

Edgar Allen Poe, Teller of Tales

Macaberesque

JOYCE BARNETT

“TO KNOW Poe, you must know more than the bare facts of his life,” and it is to gain a better knowledge of Poe, through the influences of his early life, through contemplation of his personality, temperament, and individuality, an attempt to define his philosophy, and finally his place in literature, that I devote these few words, only as an incentive to the further reading of Poe, “the most tragic figure in our literary history.”

Born in Boston in 1809, to parents who were actors, both dying in less than three years following his birth, Poe found himself at the early age of two under the guardianship of John Allan and his wife, residents of Richmond, Virginia. Here the vital formative years of his life were spent, and under the care of Mrs. Allan, who had no children of her own, his mother's affections were somewhat replaced. It was she who wished to adopt the child but her husband, for a time, consented only in allowing him to become a fixture in the family circle, and as to a legal adoption, he continued to demur.

Often reminded of the fact that he was an object of charity and was eating the bread of strangers, a feeling of inferiority against which he built up an almost morbid pride, grew up in Poe and this fact was destined to be one of the controlling factors in his character. Hervey Allan writing of Poe in his stages of development comments that, “the illusion of the permanence of home and the immutability of

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the paternal and maternal relations are the twin rocks upon which a well integrated personality is built and stands. Shatter these, or give the quality of uncertainty, and the spirit becomes one with the quicksand upon which it feels that life rests." Even with the endearments of his foster mother, Poe must have realized that he was a substitute for her own child. And if he did not sense it, Mr. Allan on several occasions took care to make it clear. It is only in later life that we find his pen putting down his true picture of a real mother in the poem entitled "To My Mother" written to his mother-in-law. With the words:

"Because I feel that, in the Heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of 'Mother'
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you—
You who are more than mother unto me . . ."

we can not help realizing that had he been under the guidance of his true parents, perhaps he would not have become the moody person that he was. To continue. Absent from his life and his work was anything like normal human passion and how his inability to feel as other men in this respect increased his sense of frustrated loneliness is shown in future events. This undeveloped conflict helped to set him apart even as a boy.

There is no doubt that Poe was a difficult child but was greatly misunderstood by his foster father. It is in the letters of Mr. Allan that we learn of Edgar's melancholy, of his moody and unruly manner toward all the family, and of that complete absence of any sense of gratitude. And yet, it was not wholly the fault of the foster father, Poe being short-tempered and not entirely guiltless. To be sure,

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Allan was not a man to understand the strange creature, but he was occupied with his own interests and did his part by sending Edgar to school and taking him on a long business trip to England. He was not one to sympathize with the moods of the boy who grew up pensive and sullen, given to quick, irrational anger and a certain pride wounding him deeply because of Allan's failure to adopt him.

An added influence on Poe, as a child, was his association with the Southern negroes and the effect which their rhythms, melodies, and folk-tales had upon him. To me, this is a point well made as somehow there seems to be an association between the melancholy Poe and the low moaning of a negro spiritual. Who can read his "Eulalie" and with the words:

"I dwell alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my
blushing bride—
Till the fair and gentle Eulalie became my
blushing bride."

and not be reminded of the dull droning of a negro at work?

As a student of the University of Virginia, Poe entered an atmosphere in which the sons of the Virginia aristocracy arrived joyously and promptly turned the school year into a gentleman's carouse. Attractive as this may sound to us, it was poison to Poe. Here he learned how recklessness may put pain to temporary flight and it was a general occurrence to gamble, fight, drink, break the windows of the faculty residences, ring the college bell at outrageous hours, and drive horses tandem through the college grounds. He could drain a glass of gin at one gulp—not because he liked the

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taste, but because he could find in it some degree of forgetfulness. He was attempting to forget his feeling of inferiority. He was not to continue this sport long, as after eight months, he was brought home by his father and put to work in a counting house.

Poe's next step in his education was his entrance to West Point to which he wished to go in order to redeem himself in his father's eyes because in a rash moment, he had joined the Army, found it not to his liking. Finally he gained a reconciliation with his father who secured his transfer to West Point. Here he was anxious to establish himself in his father's favor but upon the death of Mrs. Allan, the subsequent remarriage of his father and the possibility of a natural heir, Poe realized the futility of his plan and succeeded in getting himself expelled from the Academy, the result of a definite plan on his part. By this time, Poe's character was well on its way to development, and, no longer being under the influence of his parents, he continued in a life immersed in his own misery. It must be noted, however, before continuing with his philosophy, that Poe was not wholly a victim of an unjust man and it must be understood that a background of ideas had thrust themselves into his head, namely the insane thirst for renown which made him say: "I love fame. I dote upon it. I idolize it. I would drink to the dregs the glorious intoxication; I would have incense arise in my honor from every hamlet."

What about the element of mystery, eeriness, and strangeness which is so characteristic of all his works? To answer this, we must see Poe, the man, his personality, and temperament. Poe loved the mysterious and was sensitive to the abnormal which presupposes an even greater sensitiveness to the normal. Closely allied with this point is the idea which

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so many readers form, namely, his abnormal views were due to his excessive drinking. Testimony has proved that over long periods of time he would touch nothing, and then the fit would seize him as a sort of madness, transforming his character, and making him almost unrecognizable to his friends. He was known to have said that he drank to escape from torturing memories, from a sense of unsupportable loneliness, and a dread of some impending disaster.

Between these fits he could never understand why he had behaved as he had and would repeat over and over again that he had conquered this weakness and that he would never yield to it again. And yet, another moment would arrive when the fit would come upon him, and this proved to be a weakness that he could not overcome. To some this may be repulsive and make their reading of Poe biased, holding the thought uppermost in their mind that he was weak, could not write but with the added stimulation of drink, and that his genius was wholly dependent on this. But his environment played an important part also, and he was a person given to much thought and brooding.

An interesting point to be considered in connection with Poe's abnormality is his marriage to the child Virginia. It has been said that Poe was always in love, and the irony of his marriage to a girl, not only a child in years, being barely thirteen, but in mind, is hard to explain. With her, he filled in the necessary part of the fiction by which he lived. She accompanied him seldom when he went out into society and when she did go, remained sitting in perfect silence. Doubtless, she was blindly devoted to Poe, having known him since childhood, idolized him until her death, but it was the devotion of a child who would show off his writings to a friend as a mere toy, her mother being the

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one with whom Poe discussed his artistic affairs. Herein lies a curious relationship.

In Virginia's mother he found a substitute for his own mother, the former having an unquestionable devotion towards Poe. When we read that Virginia was the only person that Poe ever really loved we can take it as substantially true, as he was incapable of loving in any complete sense. It is a mystery to whom Poe wrote his many poems addressing them to his love. Viewing the platonic love existing between himself and Virginia, it is questionable as to the purpose of his writing such poems as "Annabel Lee," "Ulalume," and "Lenore." There is a possibility of his referring to his flirtation with a "Mary" which in itself shows when passion touched him, he went completely mad. A second love of Poe was that of Mrs. Stanard who was Poe's "Helen" in his poem and in the words:

"Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicean banks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore."

we note some of his regard for her. But the description of Virginia is disturbing. Virginia was less lovely than she was strange. Her dark hair and violet eyes, her extremely pale complexion, set off by the definite height of her forehead which spoiled the symmetry of her face, draw for us a picture of someone who because of her bright eyes and unearthly whiteness gives the appearance of something not quite human. Is it not sufficient to remark of Poe's marriage that no one could ever have filled his desires since he, himself, had not the correct interpretation of love and consequently did not know where or in whom to find it?

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Representing a flight from all reality, Poe's stories bring to us a world even more morbid than the ordinary man views actuality. Holding in mind this quality of his works, it might be well to develop it further. Those who have read his short stories can not help recalling the horrible actions of some of his characters, who seem to be overpowered by their insane desires to do such things as in the case of "Berenice" where the hero "mutilates the object of his ambivalent passion, composed half of love and half of hate, in order to extract from her mouth the teeth upon which his desires have become fixed." Numerous jolly incidents such as this are met with every turning of a page in the many collections of his works. Perhaps, you may call him mad.

But it is not only in his characters that Poe brings us these gloomy glimpses of reality. In his setting of any scene, we find the typical "dark and stormy" night, not as we think of it in a blood-curdling mystery, but portrayed in the artful way in which Poe is capable. *The Fall of the House of Usher* is one of the best examples of this quality when in his description of the house he notes: "The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves." And finally, in his own words: "I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all." His constant use of the power of darkness for the conveyance of an oppressive feeling is found throughout with particular note given to a phase of *The Pit and the Pendulum* when we see: "the tall candles sang into nothingness; their flames went out utterly; the blackness of darkness supervened; all sensations appeared swallowed up in a mad rushing descent as of the soul into Hades."

ROMANTIC NONSENSE?

As a fitting tribute to Poe, the writer, let us say: "To those who understand that character is never perfect until it is harmonious and truth never finally revealed until it is beautiful, Poe's significance is not obscured nor his work dimmed by the faults and misfortunes of his life."

Romantic Nonsense?

Is it but schoolboy's adolescent dream
To feel that far in netted mists above,
Where prism'd sky sifts colors, gay and mute,
From fluted sun rays crystallized with light,
There are tiered minarets . . . tow'ring castles of
Ideals whose wind-high walls man takes by storm?
By storm, . . . but only after he has found
That pessimism's desiccated thought
Should not his laughter leaven, nor the hood
Of tragedy lethargic make his strides.
For only when the cool, soft-sounded surge
Of bitterness he has learned to conquer,
And cynicism's empty-shelléd mouth
Has cleansed . . . can he hold ideals in his palm.

"Romantic nonsense!" unbelievers cry,
To Realism's muddied wheel tense-clinging,
And so bound to the rutted groove it makes,
They never hear the cadence of a rill.

SHIRLEY FITZGERALD

No Robbery . . . A Fair Exchange

VIRGINIA CRONAN

TO BEGIN with, there should be an introduction and general get-together here, since this department is slipping into the *QUARTERLY*'s pages for the first time in two years. Maybe you were not aware of the absence. That is all right—as long as you know we are back.

You have thought whenever the point came up that the Exchange editor collects odd college magazines, reads them with a glittering and critical eye and pronounces a weighty judgment. That is right, but those are only the first faltering steps of the matter in hand, or, more accurately, the physical supplement of a bigger and broader pursuit.

The Exchange column should be more, a lot more, than those simple and sometimes, meaningless tasks. It is the meeting ground of college literary staffs, an imaginary coffee house where we young writers from all colleges meet and thrash over what we have been doing—the merits, shortcomings, or steps-in-the-right-direction of our work. And better yet—the literary trend we are swinging to; for from the minds and pencils of these collegiennes will flow the great literature of our day and the style of the period which is yet pliable.

Of the profusion of monthlies and quarterlies which arrive at box 74, we shall take five or six, not discussed before, and introduce you to the men and women of those colleges, relay their messages and try, very humbly, to evalu-

NO ROBBERY

ate this work with the clearness and judgment of an intelligent reviewer.

To start the inadequate little habit of quoting for an opinion, we take from *Measure* of St. Joseph's in Indiana, a pretty clear definition of this whole business of exchange—"The end of exchange writing is a profit or a benefit for the publications participating in an exchange program".

To make a fresh start with a quick breath and a dive: the art work and layout of *Seton Quarterly* is as different and interesting as the contents. The spirit of the magazine is distinctive in that the reading is of the lighter type and imbued with Christian philosophy by innuendo rather than by profound statement. An excellent example is a fictional sketch called "Matt Talbot" wherein Ellen Walsh writes briefly and entertainingly of a great Catholic. "By Post to Pauline" embodies in a letter some very sound and beautiful ideas for right living.

The articles are as varied as possible: a story about Jane Carlyle based on a letter she wrote to Thomas; a translation of a modern French legend by Virginia Fowler which makes refreshing reading; an essay "On Bores" by Martha Welty whose choice of topic was good but whose slow and jumbled style commits the sin she speaks of. We are inclined to think that in one or two places, an interesting page-plan covers insufficient content—more specifically—in "Vacation Employment" which concerns a search for work resulting in a job as a model and extreme distaste for the clothing business. If it were written in a paragraph instead of lines of few words, resembling verse, we are sure the *Seton Quarterly* would not have used it.

We claim no prophetic powers, but we think we have discovered a trend. Not one to lead the world on to great

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literature surely, but a trend in college publications. In four of the magazines we have read, there were biographical sketches, and if that is not a trend, well There were two in *Damozel* from the College of Notre Dame in Maryland. On the light-hearted side is "The Forest's Prime Evil". In it, the hectic experiences of a counsellor in a summer camp are told with wonderful humor and a style reminiscent of Ruth McKenny in "My Sister Eileen". The other, "I Remember, I Remember" beautifully balances childhood's real memories of junky pockets and "The Dump" with prose that is sometimes lyric.

Other gems from *Damozel* were the editorial "Concerning Mice" which discussed in straightforward style the all-too-common disinterest among many students with anything collegiate, and a section called "Mosaics" comprising four short pieces on memories. We have no adverse or constructive criticism for *Damozel*.

The Holy Cross Purple monthlies arrive with a reputation that is almost a literary heritage behind them. And we can see why. The articles are mature; the staff seems to be more intent on making this a literary magazine than many college groups who would rather amuse and increase their readers. However, we do take exception in two cases: a story called "The Question of the Hour" which is incoherent in many places and leaves the reader dazed and nonplussed, and an article on "Twenty Years With Mother" which does not lack actual literary merit, but is not clever enough to carry out the idea of life with mother being a rollicking experience. Whether intended to be serious stuff or playful nonsense, it is neither, and the sole effect is that "Mother" must be a tyrant.

But these are exceptions in pages of fine work. We

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want to nominate "Bleeding Sky", a psychological story, for top rating. It is not a true short story, lacking plot requirements, but is rather the vivid revelation of the mind-workings of a murderer—the stress he undergoes, his act, the torture it causes him, and his madness ending in suicide. In advance of any attack, we do not think the moral issue in this story should keep it out of the magazine.

NOTES IN PASSING:

A wistful little verse in the *Russell Sage Review* has lodged in our memory. Here it is,

"My tears have wet
Your hands,
But you would not
Lift up your foot
From my heart."

"A Dog's Day" from the *Sector* of St. Elizabeth's in New Jersey is descriptive and clever with detail, but it reminds us disturbingly of a nature story from a children's book. After all, a literary magazine . . .

It is unfortunate that the best article in the same *Sector* titled, "Better Late Than Ever" and all about the procrastination of term papers, is anonymous.

For one last look at the *Sector*,—we like the idea of one-page articles, and would like it better if they were bits of literary information instead of "The Topics of Hats" and "Campus Crazes".

One of the pitifully few articles on literature and writers is "The Sad Music of Humanity" in the *Fontbill Dial* of Mount St. Vincent. This is a well-informed and easily-read piece on Emily Bronte. Is a good article like this such a difficulty to write that we find one in every five publications?

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Most of the editorials read concerned the terror in Europe and insisted that America *must* be disinterested.

Seniors with an envious eye on the teacher's rostrum will enjoy the witty article on the woes of Observation and Practice Teaching in the *Fontbill Dial* again. It is "No Apple For The Teacher". From one Exchange to another, we admire that department in the *Dial* and hope it grows at least a page.

We hope we have not seemed dictatorial.

We wish more colleges had exchanges.

Finland 1940

Gone now—gone to fight defender's war,
Uniformed in dusty brown
Standing guard at Finnish town,
Gone now—as many men have gone before.

Waiting—waiting for his swift return;
Wondering at set of sun
Wond'ring if his day is done
Weeping mother—no hope can you discern.

Praying—praying in the dim twilight;
Asking that he kill no one,
Begging God to spare her son,
Standing—praying all the long lone night.

CATHERINE RICKERT

Adventure in Superstition

Brides in a Circle of Devils

MARY O'TOOLE

 RANGE blossoms and rosemary, old shoes and pelt-ing rice are indispensable traditions observed at most weddings. Today they are seemingly just a contribution to the general gaiety; however they owe their origin to an ancient "What-next?" fear. Uncertainty frequently produces absurdity. Marriage has bred more farcical traditions and superstitions than almost any other institution of either human or divine origin. These peculiar beliefs, challenges to the reason, are generally revered as aids for conquering the unknown rather than belittled as mere charms enhancing a ceremony.

Even in distant pagan days marriage assumed what may be termed a sacramental character. At the varied ancient ceremonies there was always a feeling present that spirits gathered for the rite. Usually these were of the malevolent character, being mysterious and unknown; and most tradition evolved from a desire to rid the bridal pair of these evil spirits.

While woman was not enthroned after marriage in tribal days, she was elevated to flashlight prominence during the days of courtship and on the wedding day. Among the Sakalanas, the aspirant to a girl's hand was tried by ordeal. Spears were shot at him and his worthiness was judged by his ability to dodge them. Marriage by capture, making the bride feel either like a hunted rabbit or a treasure chest was fashionable, but not extensively practiced. It is sug-

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gested that the "best man" of today is a descendant of the brawniest individual who proved the most helpful to the intended bridegroom in the capture of his spouse.

The coy girl of the nineteenth century had as her predecessor certain African tribeswomen who would dress the wrong girl for the capture. When she had been forcibly carried out of the village she would reveal her identity and skip laughingly back to her home. Fortunately, this was taken as a great joke by the potential cannibals. Next in individuality were those Saxons of Transylvania who used to conceal the bride with two married women behind a curtain. While all three tried to mislead him, the bridegroom would try to guess which was to be his wife.

It is only among a few peoples that woman did not have such freedom. Modesty is apparently a natural virtue, encouraged, but not introduced, by Christianity. At the wedding banquet in Morocco, the bride was obliged to sit with eyes closed and mouth shut, very much like a mummy. This silence was preserved until after the birth of her first child. In many countries, even today, the bride veils her face after marriage and may expose it only to her husband. In Egypt the husband himself had to make a cash payment to look on the face of his wife for the first time.

But with interest in modesty came also fear of the occult, and devious methods were used to rid the newlyweds of the powers of evil. Bribery was not uncommon, since the custom of throwing rice originated in the idea that if the spirits were fed, they would depart. In Greece the "spirits" fared a little better, getting sweetmeats and flour in lieu of rice. The bridegroom, however, was the loser for such sticky, unctuous sweets were poured over him after the ceremony. Thriftier souls, suspicious of bribery, threat-

ADVENTURE IN SUPERSTITION

ened the evil spirits. In China a new bride, borne in procession in her bridal chair, was thought to be the center of a ring of devils. An emblem, thought to send the unwelcome guests scurrying back to their depths, was carried in front of her: a figure of a Taoist priest riding a tiger and brandishing a sword.

Cruelty and violence were directed against the unknown in some places. In Manchuria the bridegroom shot three arrows into the windows of his home and set off some firecrackers before his bride was carried in. Roman custom decreed that the bridegroom comb the hair of his bride with a spear so that all surrounding spirits could be properly killed. Need we mention the tickling sensation which must have been the bride's? Perhaps the archway of swords in West Point weddings is a remnant of the old European custom of having a guard armed with guns accompany the bridal pair to church to prevent any harm to the future couple.

Ancients accredited the invisible with little intelligence; many scornfully tried to deceive the ever present spirits by various ruses. In Fez about six or eight women dressed like the bride confronted the evil ones with a "if you can guess which one I am, you can haunt me" attitude. Often a lock of the bride's hair was shorn or at times her whole head was shaved in an effort to throw unwanted forces off the track. Another clever idea to avoid meeting the spirits was conceived in Persia where marriage by proxy became the rule. An almost Christian element appeared when people began to fast to keep evil from entering through their food.

As for the ceremony itself, the ages have seen thousands of different types. In Central Australia, the tribes identify love charm with the rite itself. Hence, a man or woman

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can charm a person of the other sex by making music on a bullroarer. If he or she comes, they are considered married. In the Duke of York Islands a cocoanut is broken over the head of the couple. If the girl drinks some of its milk, the ceremony is complete. Among a certain tribe, a girl can marry only once in twelve years. Thus, she can marry at twelve years but not again until she is twenty-four. This difficulty is gotten around by having her marry a flower, then throwing it into a well, making her a widow and free to marry again.

Marriage by inoculation or the taking or sharing of something of each other, like eating the same meal, drinking from the same cup, smoking the same cigarette, or exchanging gifts, was widely practiced. In old France the mere sharing of an apple constituted marriage.

Although most of the customs mentioned above have become obsolete through Christian influence, we still have many leftovers from pagan days. The basic doubtfulness is still present and human nature still seeks tangible means to obviate it. The rede, "Happy is the bride on whom the sun shines" may be traced to one of the first hopeful and cheerful traditions—that of the newlyweds standing together and greeting the rising sun, symbolic of the beginning of a new life.

The breaking of glasses at weddings follows a Hebrew custom of shattering a glass and vowing faithfulness until the glass became perfect again. The use of orange blossoms is derived from the Saracens who thought them a sign of prosperity, while rosemary is subtly used since it is supposed to strengthen the memory.

Many superstitions surround the blessed wedding ring. In Ireland it is popularly believed to be a cure for warts,

WINTER MADNESS

sores and styes. The loss of the ring portends the loss of the husband's affections, while its removal signifies his death.

Custom and wit have not deprived even the disappointed lover from a share in the wedding day traditions, for he is allotted a garland made of willows and a smelling bottle.

And so—to brides, grooms, and disappointed lovers—orange blossoms and rosemary, old shoes and rice today are as cherished as yesterday.

Winter Madness

I reach to pull a leaf from off this tree;
The other leaves are fallen, it is time they all
Were gone and did not linger on
Like painted fingers, teasing
At my mouth, that I might smile.

It is dead-like winter, all things must cease
And fall in quiet that my mind
Might sleep, and hear not all these
Tearing, strange things of autumn.

I reach to pull the leaf—
It turns from these my fingers,
Wills, and is released not falling—
Yet this is wrong, and cannot happen!

I anger, drawing breath, and maddened,
White destructive, reach to pull,
To crush within my fingers—tear—!
It will not fall, it is that thing—
My heart! I see it hanging there.

URSULA MARKS

Enmity

And what it can do

RUTH FOX

EXCITEMENT was high in the city, the heedless, hysterical excitement of triumph. The streets were jammed with a mob that had gone crazy with patriotic joy. People who had been strangers were shaking hands indiscriminately and congratulating each other loudly, joined in those bonds of friendship that only a common happiness or a common disaster can forge.

A man stood alone in the shadow of a doorway, his face startlingly white against his dark hair. For a minute he stared morosely into the throng of people that surged passed him, and then with a dramatic grimace pushed his way swiftly through the crowd and turned down a side street. Once there he walked on more slowly to a place he knew where the brandy was good.

Except for the bartender and waiter, and a small group of men discussing the affairs of the nation in low and guarded tones, it was deserted. The man sat down at a table near the door and ordered a glass of brandy. He could still hear the crowd cheering in the distance, and he muttered softly. The frenzied joy of the city, and the thought of the man who was its hero embittered him beyond all reason. For months he had tortured himself with animosity for his Arch-enemy. His days were sunk in despair hating him, and his nights were filled with horrible waking dreams of him. To the brooding man it seemed that there was a nobility in a hatred as self-effacing as his. For, although it had no

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personal motivation at all, this deep, malignant enmity for one man had poisoned his heart, his life and shattered into bits every hope for the future.

The salvo of shouting on the street grew fainter, died into whispers and disappeared. The man knew that half the city was going to the house of his enemy because he had promised them a speech. What would he say in that speech? Would he boast of a victory that had crushed a crippled foe? Would he tell them to rejoice because his army had left the enemy territory a shattered waste?

He felt suddenly sick and suffocated; he threw some money on the table and went out to the street. This that he had conjured up remained in his mind to torment him—"The enemy's territory a shattered waste."

How he had loved the land that had been destroyed! The land that had been created to give happiness to its people. . . . He thought of the warm, sunny days . . . a balm for his turbulent youth, the peaceful moonlit nights that had made him forget everything but beauty. A warm breeze—it was April—blew across his face, and he realized that spring had come. Closing his eyes he saw his childhood home. Flowers would be budding there, and birds singing. All the land would soon run riot with the sweet-smelling grasses.

But what could spring mean to his suffering countrymen now? Many were dead; and those that were left, were poor, possessing nothing but the ashes of what had been homes. To all of them, he thought, the greatest tragedy was the knowledge that the cause for which they had fought so gallantly had groveled in the dust, beaten, exhausted.

But was it so dead? The man smiled almost happily, for he knew that in three days that cause would spring to vitality again, a bright and glorious vitality born of a hope

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that would lead it to victory at last. He had made his decision; it was irrevocable. In three days his enemy would be dead, a bullet buried somewhere in his body.

"He will be dead," thought the man, "I am going to kill him; I am going to destroy him just as he has destroyed my country, and I will be the liberator of my people."

"The liberator of my people . . . the liberator . . ." He repeated the word again and again, fascinated by its liquid sonority. He had come to his hotel, and ignoring the greeting of the night clerk, he entered his room, threw himself on the bed and slept.

The next three days dragged unbearably, second lagged on second bringing closer the doom of two men with painful, plodding determination. The deed he was about to do he thought of only in relation to his own sense of duty. That he was going to kill a fellow human being failed to horrify or even impress him. Nor did he consider the prospect of his ruin. He would let nothing so fleeting as a successful life stand in the way of what seemed to him a moral obligation.

"I am going to change the course of history", he told himself, "and dig a new channel into which it will rush, and the world will forget the past before it forgets my name. Some will hate me for what I am going to do. They will hunt me down and perhaps they will kill me, but I and those for whom I am doing this thing will know that I am right."

He was like a madman those three days. Perhaps he was.

Anti-climax led to climax. All his plans had been made; his accomplices were trained in their parts, and his own methods of procedure he considered flawless. Fortune held out the hem of her garment for him to grasp. The

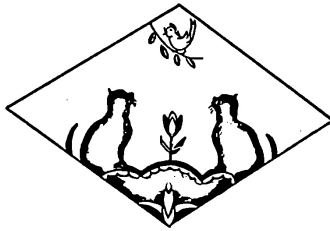
ENMITY

victim was to appear for the first time in weeks at a public gathering. There would be people about, and confusion. The thing could be done swiftly and an escape be made before the stunned mob would realize what had happened. It was unique in its perfection.

The proximity of the hour frightened him for the first time. So he stopped on the way for a glass of brandy: liquor made him a genius.

Knowing he could delay no longer, he went out, walked swiftly to the appointed spot. People were about, people who knew him and delayed him with inane banter. He smiled at them slightly, damning them silently.

He was inside now, walking—almost slowly—up a flight of stairs. It was dark for a play was in progress. A theatre was the place to stage such a drama. He had a keen sense of the dramatic, which was not strange, for he came from an illustrious family of the Theatre—the Booths—and he, John Wilkes, was not the least of them.



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Editorial

CRACKS AND CRANNIES

Ancient houses, dry rock fences, some eggs, and human personalities are alike in one respect. Can you solve the puzzle? No? They all have cracks . . . insignificant flaws, sometimes unsightly, but often not visible to the naked eye . . . which eat away walls, make worlds crumble.

As the mysterious, unseen yet tremendous power of termites can undermine the very foundations of a building, lofty palace as well as humbled hut, and a crevice in the skin lend entrance to the vilest of bacterial organisms, the proverbial "chink in the armor", the crevice in the personality, may be our human ruin.

Fissures, unpolished broken areas in the veneer of twentieth century sophistication, those blatant faults which others see . . . no, not of these do we think, for they are easily corrected. But rather, those insidious flaws, deep within ourselves, in the walls of our personalities.

An example? Habit weathers our human walls until they break. College girls, unfortunately we must admit, have mordant tongues. And caustic words embellished with "a little learning" may indeed be "a dangerous thing." So, let us introspect a bit; it never has done any harm. Let every reader find with fingers sensitive and groping, those jagged, cleft places, those detrimental habits.

If only we can find them, our problems are solved. For a chink fortified with mortar never will give way. We have the mortar . . . Christian faith. We have the trowel . . . a teaching Church.

SHIRLEY FITZGERALD

—And If You're Reading

TEACHER'S ROSTRUM

A Goodly Fellowship. By MARY ELLEN CHASE.
MACMILLAN, N. Y. 1939.

Anyone who has an interest in literature or the teaching of it will succumb to the charm with which Miss Chase tells the story of her experiences.

The reader shares the pedagogical career of Mary Ellen Chase which began when she was nineteen. In a Maine rural school where her pupils ranged so widely in age, she found it necessary to place the smallest of them in low tubs from which "they stared in delighted wonder" at the "furious educational process" of some forty-nine others.

Her informal manner of telling on herself is delightful and her experiences, as impossible as finding herself on a drawbridge which was in the act of rising, are as unique as she was naïve in the ways of the world!

Strength, humor, and sympathy flow through the pages, and the reader's response is a sincere desire that there be more teachers with the true love of teaching in their hearts—more who possess "A Goodly Fellowship."

LORRAINE V. GOULD

BAFFLING ENIGMA

In Stalin's Secret Service. By W. G. KRIVITSKY.
HARPER's, 1939.

Russia, both old and new, has long been a baffling enigma to the western mind; Krivitsky's book throws revealing light on many puzzling situations. The procedures of the OGPU, the character of Stalin himself, the psychol-

ogy and methods that produced the "staged" confessions of the Bolshevik leaders, are revealed by a man who stood well behind the scenes. We must accept Comrade Krivitsky's charges on faith until the future provides documentary and other evidence to support them. In the light of recent events in Russia, however, especially the mass treason trials and the pact with Hitler, the exposé is extremely plausible.

In Stalin's Secret Service leaves us as Americans with the uncomfortable realization of the ingenuousness and naïvete of the American as contrasted with the inscrutable, long-accustomed-to-intrigue European. The United States, while favored as a convenient source of supply and a scene of operations for Stalin's choice plans, is left as definitely "out in the cold" with regard to the real interests of Europe as in the days of the American Revolution.

MARY E. GILLEN

LILT OF MUSIC

Johann Strauss—Father and Son. By HEINRICH EDWARD JACOB.

GREYSTONE PRESS, N. Y. 1940.

H. E. Jacob's new book presents Johann Strauss, father and son, Vienna's renowned composers. Their stories are written with the stately lilt of the waltz that gave them fame, but lack none of the life and gaiety that was Vienna. This book abounds in musical illusions which add to its scope and diversity. Two sections, one devoted to father Strauss, one to son, compose Mr. Jacob's latest work which flows as smoothly as the Blue Danube itself. The book ends with several remarks on Sousa's marches and American jazz. It is truly well done and deserving of high praise.

CATHERINE RICKERT

THE QUARTERLY

WRY SMILES

Lyric Laughter. By ARTHUR GUITERMAN.

E. P. DUTTON & Co., INC., N. Y. 1939, 288 pages.

You can tuck this one right on the first row of your bookshelf next to Shakespeare and Milton, Shelley and Browning. It has a gay orange cover with bright green lettering and a still gayer collection of spritely poems all neatly catalogued under the headings "Bread and Circuses", "Unwisdom of the East", "Manly Manhattan", and "Art for Art's Sake".

Yes, it's Art Guiterman's "Lyric Laughter"—and laughter it is indeed, gentle, subtle, written with a wry smile at the foibles of human nature.

Three old favorites that will never cease to be charming and riotous in their implications and novelty of idea appear here: the tale of Sam-u-el and Cam-u-el, the department store ballad of "The Quest of the Ribband", and the immortal lyric of The Antiseptic Baby and The Prophylactic Pup.

Guiterman runs the gauntlet of form, from the epigram to the lyric, with surprising dexterity and pertinency to the homely ideas he conveys. This finish he puts to his funniness is far more satisfying and proper than the improvisations of Ogden Nash who, of course, writes in a somewhat similar vein.

And all the poems from "Pershing at the Front" to the fantasy of kittens' velvet paws in "White Magic" are just aching to be read aloud and so be flavored with sound. For the metre of each complements the nicety of phrase, the grasping of the incongruity of certain situations which he expresses in this intellectual fooling.

—AND IF YOU'RE READING

Mr. Guiterman is a perfect handler of the art of understatement and overstatement. You must read his little ditties, for they are refreshing and indeed, a bit of "Lyric Laughter".

DOROTHY ZWIER

THE SEEING PUBLIC

America at the Movies. By MARGARET FARRAND THORP.
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS. 1939.

In this informative, highly absorbing book, Miss Thorp treats the various angles associated with the motion picture industry both from the production end and from that of the spectator. This gigantic industry in all of its ramifications greatly affects the eighty-five million American weekly movie-goers. Fashions in clothes, coiffures, decoration, and even conduct are adopted by the eager public. Propaganda films are not uncommon, and many are produced at the request of the government whose aim it is to instill national pride, especially during troubled days. Regarding the reform movement, the author states that the Catholic Church, through the Legion of Decency, is without doubt the greatest moral influence in the cinema.

America at the Movies is certainly well worth reading for enjoyment, and it will also provide ample material for your conversationalists.

CORNELIA GASPARI

FLUID DESIGNS

This, My Letter. By SARA HENDERSON HAY.
ALFRED A. KNOPF, N. Y. 1939.

As the snowflake, evanescent, sparkling world that it is, is the embodiment of exquisite symmetry, Sara Henderson

THE QUARTERLY

Hay's verses hold crystallized the fluid designs words make in meter. Each word is severely chosen, our poet belonging to the school of the "exact" word.

One critic has said she has a full pen of satire for the adults of this world. This writer, perhaps naïve in belief, finds no such irony . . . an insight into the falterings of man, the sophisticate, yes, . . . but no bitterness. Of children, and of her own son especially, she writes with a smooth and tender touch, smiling with love. Yes, it is the smaller thing in life this poet cherishes.

Many of us who have lost sight of the lesser thing would do well to read her verses . . . and remember. This young poet's work is excellent in technique; in artistry, complete.

SHIRLEY FITZGERALD

A WOMAN OF MYSTERY

Mrs. Fitzherbert. "A Life chiefly from unpublished sources."

By SHANE LESLIE.

BENZIGER BROS., N. Y. 1939.

This is the dramatic biography of a gentle, unassuming lady who came disturbingly close to ruining a kingdom. Although she was the real wife of King George IV, she was never allowed to admit it. Their marriage was acknowledged by the Church but not the state. Because of her delicate position she was the object of ridicule and plots, her character being continually questioned throughout her lifetime. Upon her death she was forcibly surrounded by a cloak of mystery which was never permitted to be removed.

Shane Leslie, a descendant of her adopted daughter, wrote her story for the sole purpose of vindication. He has done it so eloquently that she is indeed vindicated forever.

THE QUARTERLY

Concerning the book's merit, let us say that the Catholic Book of the Month Club has selected it as representative.

To gather the data was most difficult; Mr. Leslie wrote that the search led from bonfire to bonfire. However, he has succeeded; the mystery is forever removed. And the result is a most scholarly book.

He weaves only the outlines of the pattern, leaves the detail to letters, notes, and documents of Mrs. Fitzherbert's time. Such technique gives the book an unusual charm. How spicy it is to see awe-inspiring characters referred to breezily as "Beezlebub"! It gives you a smug, "I know a secret" feeling. But I am afraid that the next time I run across a picture of the portly, commanding George IV I shall involuntarily exclaim, "Hyah 'Prinney'!"

If you are a lover of history, if you like chatty little peeks into private lives, you will enjoy it. But you cannot hurry. It is not that kind of book. SUE SHERWOOD

SAINTS REMAIN MEN

Sanctity in America. By THE MOST REVEREND AMLETO GIOVANNI CICOGNANI. ST. ANTHONY GUILD PRESS, N. J. 1939.

The Vatican Basilica had not often witnessed so many, solemn ceremonies of beatification and canonization as during the Jubilee Year of Pius XI. Spurred on by the impetus given to the Causes of many Servants of God, Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, has given us a surprisingly absorbing account of the lives of those men and women whose sanctity has enriched our land.

The saints of other lands have been honored with scores of books written to their glory, but we in America have been waiting for just such a collection of sketches of lives of holy people. SHIRLEY FITZGERALD

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